

FIELD TRIP REPORT

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Report on Field Trip to Phu Yen Province, May 25, 26

While in Phu Yen Province, I discussed cadre questions with the Vietnamese Provincial Cadre Chief, the Provincial Chief for Rural Construction, some of their subordinates, and visited four Rural Construction Cadre Teams in the field.

The Provincial Cadre Chief, Captain Ho Van Hung, who formerly worked at the Vung Tau National Cadre Training Center, appears competent and well organized. His headquarters staff of 24 is divided into a Planning-Coordination-Reports Section, an Administration & Supply Section, and a Psychological Welfare Section.

My first visit was made to Dong Binh hamlet at about 4:00 p.m. After about 10 minutes inquiry and search we found someone who called himself Chief of the PAT Team, (Vo Trang Truyen Tin and not Biet Kich) (dressed in khaki) and another man who described himself as Chief of the Construction Cadre (Xay Dung) (dressed in a clean white shirt, city pants and shoes, and an inch long fingernail). They stated there were 35 PAT, 10 Construction Cadre (of whom 6 were Census Grievance) and 2 female health workers, all of whom were said to be on duty except the last two. A hamlet administration was functioning, and had been functioning before the cadre arrived in the hamlet. The hamlet census book seemed to be in order.

I then made a tour of the hamlet with these leaders trying to find some of the cadre and to see their "work". I found several PAT who were dressed in khaki, camouflage, or black pajamas, and several "Construction" cadre who were dressed in civilian clothes, including one in light blue pajamas.

None of them were doing anything whatsoever, and some appeared to be half asleep. The projects I saw which the team had done consisted of a widened roadway, a defensive ditch, and a low level cactus fence. A large self-help bridge, and 5 self-help classrooms were being built, but to what extent these projects depended on cadre support, or initiation was uncertain. The Reconstruction cadre chief said he would quit if he had to go to Vung Tau, because he would not be able to support his family during the training period. This group is scheduled to leave Dong Binh next week. They said they stayed in the hamlet at night.

In Phu Nhuan hamlet the cadre group consists of 43 PATs, 3 Census Grievance, 3 Civil Affairs, and 3 New Life Development. Of this number, 26 have gone to Vung Tau, the other PAT are new recruits. The Team Chief said he was a former political cadre (chanh tri), he had never been to Vung Tau, and the PAT Chief was under him. The Census and organization book appeared to be in order, and 14 armed youth had been chosen, but none yet had been armed. I then tried to find the cadre who I had been told were digging a defensive ditch. They had already stopped work (11:00 a.m.) I found a farmer with a hoe who said he had been helping the cadre dig the trench that morning. I asked the farmer if the cadre ever helped the farmer dig his field, the answer was no, but, the cadre chief said they helped build roofs and building for the hamlet people. The cadre were finally located in several of the largest houses in the hamlet, resting and working on personnel forms. At night, they said they stayed in other houses in the same hamlet. I talked to several farmers who said their most important need was water. The VC had partially destroyed an irrigation canal. The cadre were working on a dam which would help alleviate this situation. All the PAT wore black pajamas. The others wore civilian clothing, but the Chief had a dark colored shirt and calloused hands.

Phu Lam Hamlet. The cadre had all disappeared at 11:30 a.m. except for 2 who were just getting on their bicycles. The others had gone for lunch, some to the market, and some home to Tua Hoa. I asked an old woman if the cadre helped any. Yes, she said, there were two girls who gave out medicine all morning. Also, she said they helped people fix houses. Her attitude toward the cadre was positive. She ~~said~~ then said none of them stayed in the hamlet at night. I asked an old man who said he had not seen them in the houses at night, but had seen some on patrol. Since this is a hamlet of 10,000 population and 21 square hectares, the later statement is probably more significant. The team chief later told me they slept in hamlet but not near the headquarters.

That afternoon I met and was very impressed by the team chief, Mr. Hoany Xuan Cu, who is not PAT and who has never been to Vung Tau, but is scheduled to go in June. There are 42 PATs., 9 Rural Construction, and 2 female medical cadre. Everyone on the team wore black pajamas.

In the afternoon they were (~~build~~) building and repairing a wooden fence with the help of some villagers which was now 5 kilometers in length. They had turned a footpath into road which was several hundred yards in length and quite impressive. They said there were 5,000 refugees in the hamlet and they had spend a lot of time with them. 5 self- help classrooms were being built, and they had made requets for three wells . The Census books all appeared in order and the cadre had organized 19 new inter family groups for a total of 39 in the hamlet. The hamlet chief had been elected last year.

^Trang Thinh hamlet: There were 40 PAT, 4 Census Grievance, 3 civil affairs and one chief of all cadre who has yet gone to Vang Tau. 2 female health workers and one construction cadre were in the District town making reports. The cadre had made a fence which the VC had torn down 200 yards of the night before; a not too difficult task since a child could pull it apart.

Again census books were in order except for some economic charts, such as land survey. (I was told the biggest landowner had 3 hectares, but the first farmer I spoke to had 6) I was shown a beautiful self-help bridge-water lock and cadre working to clear ~~x~~ the side of a path. 20 yards had been done when I arrived (they knew I was coming). An hour later I came back and they had already stopped. I asked a hamlet girl why she was working on the project. He ~~said~~ ^{said} her inter family group leader had told he to. I was taken to see a bamboo material guard house undergoing construction. I asked a farmer why he was helping the cadre build this. He said the cuputy cadre ~~chief~~ chief had told him to. They had begun work 3 hours earlier--about the time they had learned of my visit.

chief

The hamlet/was in office before the cadre arrived.